

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

MINERALS STRATEGIC IMPACT ON REGIONAL STABILITY IN AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

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This paper explores the potential impact that gold, diamonds, and columbite-tantalite (coltan) has on regional stability in Africa. Recent studies indicate that both states and warlords have been mining these minerals to finance armed movements. The primary country research focus will be on Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi.

MINERALS STRATEGIC IMPACT ON REGIONAL STABILITY IN AFRICA

Today's global flows of goods, services, finance, people and images spotlight the many interlinkages in the security of all people. We share a planet, a biosphere, a technological arsenal, a social fabric. The security of one person, one community, one nation rests on the decisions of many others—sometimes fortuitously, sometimes precariously.

—UN Commission on Human Security 2003

Africa is seemingly in perpetual conflict. Seven of the 16 current UN peacekeeping operations are taking place in Africa.¹ There are three broad classifications of conflict in Africa. These broad classifications can be labeled as civil conflicts, insurgencies, and wars that began when the African nations received their independence from colonial powers.² Some form of financing must be available to sustain a conflict beyond its initial stages. National treasure, loans, foreign assistance, captured enemy assets, or natural resources are just a few financing sources that have in the past extended conflicts beyond their initial stages. Africa is a continent that is rich in natural resources.

This paper will open the door to understanding the question of minerals strategic impact on regional stability in Africa; specifically, whether or not minerals are funding warlords and their conflicts. This paper will focus on the mineral-rich region of the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) and three of its neighboring countries: Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi.

Background

Africa is enormous and the conflict areas within Africa are significantly larger than those found in other continents. The sheer size of the conflict zones make it exponentially difficult for governments to bring conflicts under control since insurgents have tremendous freedom of movement. This freedom of movement inhibits independent confirmation of insurgent actions taking place in the more remote regions.

The country that seems to be the linchpin for stability in sub-Sahara Africa is the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Democratic Republic of Congo's land mass is roughly 905,568 square miles.³ In Africa, it is second only to Algeria. The equivalent in the United States would be the combined land mass of Alaska, Texas, and Mississippi.⁴ Coupled with the sheer size of the country is an almost nonexistent infrastructure that makes cross country movement exceedingly difficult.

Any map of Africa will clearly show all of its countries' names and the boundaries between those countries. Clear boundaries on a map do not equate to clear boundaries on the ground or

a government's ability to control its territory. In many African countries, the control of the country is limited to major population centers while large tracts of essentially ungoverned space are controlled by warlords or local leaders. Many articles refer to these large tracts of ungoverned space land that are not under the direct control of the government as the "hinterlands".

Some of these "hinterlands" have populations that are ethnically homogenous, grouped together by some geographical feature, or share a common heritage or religion. When a state is unable to provide basic governance to these "hinterlands", a security or governance vacuum is created. This vacuum could be filled either by a local leader providing rudimentary leadership and security or an external force recognizing the security vacuum as an opportunity to be exploited. The word "warlord" will be used in this paper to describe the leadership (local or external leadership) of the ungoverned territories that are outside the state's direct control.

A warlord may be a true representative of the people being led, or may be purely exploiting the population. When the latter condition exists, it is called "Warlordism". According to Wikipedia Encyclopedia, "Warlordism appears in so-called failed states - states in which central government and nationwide authorities have collapsed or exist merely formally without actual control over the state territory. They are usually defined by a high level of clientelism, low bureaucratic control and a high motivation in prolonging war for the maintenance of their economic system, mainly based on the extraction of natural resources."⁵

Between 1996 and 2003, the Democratic Republic of Congo was at war. All neighboring countries of the eastern portion of the Democratic Republic of Congo were involved in this war. The war was over ethnicity and bad governance as much as it was over natural resources. Some have even called it a "self-financing" war in which armies would concentrate their efforts over the resource rich eastern region and then use those minerals to finance their war efforts. The war was so significant that some have called it the First African War.⁶ The death toll from this war is estimated to be 3.8 million. The vast majority of these deaths came from disease and starvation.⁷

There were three events or phases of this war that created the environment for this crisis. The first event was a war within Rwanda from 1994-1995 which resulted in hundreds of thousands of refugees flooding into the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo. These refugees changed the demographic balance in this region and created a new security situation.⁸ The second phase began in 1996 when Laurent-Desire Kabila, the leader of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL) led a rebel movement that replaced the government of Zaire (to be named later as the Democratic Republic of Congo).

The exploitation of natural resources began with the western movement of the AFDL rebel forces from the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo to the capital city. The third phase began in 1998 with fighting in the northern, western, and eastern parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Troops from Rwanda and Uganda moved into the bordering eastern region to fill a security vacuum that was created by the fighting.⁹ Rwanda and Uganda then began exploiting resources from the eastern region.

Exploitation of Natural Resources from the Democratic Republic of Congo

In April 2001, the President of the United Nations Security Council received a report from a panel of experts on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth that were extracted from the Democratic Republic of Congo. The report lists multiple categories of products that were exploited but narrowed the report's focus to coltan, diamonds, gold, cassiterites, wildlife, timber, coffee, ivory, gorillas, palm oil, and financial liquid assets (i.e. cash and bonds). Illegal exploitation is defined as "... extraction, production, commercialization and exports – taking place in the Democratic Republic of Congo without the consent of the legitimate government are illegal."¹⁰ The report names Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi as the key belligerents.

The two primary techniques that these countries used to exploit resources were through confiscation and extraction. The United Nations report uncovered two interesting confiscation examples. For example, the number of registered cars in Uganda increased by 25% during 1999, the year after Uganda occupied portions of the eastern region in the Democratic Republic of Congo.¹¹ Another example was seven years' worth of coltan was already mined and stored in the Sominki mining sector.¹² From late November 1998, Rwandan forces organized the removal and transported of the coltan to Kigali.¹³ Some sources claim it took the Rwandans about one month to fly between 1,000 and 1,500 tons of this coltan to Kigali.¹⁴

As soon as the confiscation phase ended, the extraction phase began. The extraction phase included, but was not limited to, the mining of gold, diamonds, coltan, and other minerals. It also included the harvesting of coffee, timber, palm oil, and bark. The United Nations report also uncovered some interesting extraction examples. For example, the bark of the *Prunus Africana* is used in prostate treatment medicine. The *Prunus Africana* is not grown in Burundi, but between 1998 and 1999, Burundi exported this bark. Also, both Uganda and Rwanda were involved in the illegal mining of minerals from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Several methods were used to steal the minerals. The first method was by individual opportunist soldiers taking advantage of the situation and mining for their personal benefit. The

second method was by cooperative locals who willingly mined under the control of Rwandan and Ugandan commanders. Some of these locals migrated from agriculture to mining many years earlier for the perceived economic benefit that mining would bring compared to growing crops. At a gold mine in the Kilo-Moto mineral district, locals would pay the Ugandan commanders one gram of gold every day that they mined. This mine could handle 2,000 miners per day, and with this quantity of miners, the daily amount of gold collected was on average of 2 kg.¹⁵ The last method was to bring in prisoners from other countries. One report states that there were as many as 1,500 Rwandan prisoners at one coltan mine in the Democratic Republic of Congo willingly mining coltan under the watch of Rwandan guards, in return for a reduced sentence.¹⁶

More than enough materials were extracted to fund Uganda's involvement in the war. A key indicator of the wealth extracted would be Uganda's exports. Uganda does not have any diamond mines, but between 1997 and 2000, it exported 33,227 carats of diamonds.¹⁷ Additionally, between 1994 and 2000, Uganda mined only .0268 tons (53.6 lbs) of gold from Ugandan soil but managed to export 42.51 tons (85,020 lbs) of gold.¹⁸ One report highlighted by the United Nations stated "between 1998 and 2000, about 1,800 trucks carrying logs, timber, coffee, medicinal barks, cassiterite, pyrochlore, iron ore, teas and quinine have transited through Uganda."¹⁹ The magnitude of this truck movement shows the enormity of Uganda's involvement in extracting resources from the Democratic Republic of Congo and illegally exporting them for profit.

Rwanda's mineral exports during the same time period follows the same pattern as Uganda's exports. Rwanda has no diamond mines yet they exported 46,218 carats of diamonds.²⁰ Rwanda also had export spikes for gold and coltan during the years they occupied eastern portions of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Burundi also exported minerals it does not produce, such as gold, diamonds, coltan, copper, and cobalt.²¹

Cycle of Violence Surrounding the Exploitation of Minerals

In some 30 countries, armed groups depend on conflict commodities to finance their arms purchases and pay their troops. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the illegal exploitation of coltan, gold, copper, cobalt and diamonds has fueled the conflict.²²

The war costs incurred by the governments of Uganda and Rwanda in the Democratic Republic of Congo far exceeded what was budgeted for their armies.²³ The United Nations report captures some of the estimated costs each government incurred during the war. The costs included soldiers' salary, transportation costs, bonus payments, maintenance, and

replacement of equipment. Compared with their defense budget figures, expenditures exceeded budgets,²⁴ and additional funding had to come from other sources. Mineral exploitation from the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo is one major source of additional funding.

The battlefields and skirmish areas during the war years (1996 - 2003) were “generally around coltan- and diamond-mining or coltan-rich areas.”²⁵ These skirmishes were conducted for one of two reasons, either for the financial benefit gained from exploiting the minerals, or the intent to deny these financial rewards to their opponents. Without the wealth that was extracted from these areas, the war could not have continued for as long as it did.

The cycle started with the armies providing security to the individuals and/or companies who mined the minerals. A portion of the extracted wealth would then be shared with the armies, and this in turn funded the occupation of the region.²⁶ With their presence being funded, the armies could remain in the area to provide continued security. This cycle created a situation/war that was self-financing.

Two example minerals, diamonds and coltan, will be discussed in the following sections. Coltan will be highlighted because of the high value of the mineral and because of the ecological damage that took place with frantic and unregulated mining. Diamonds will be highlighted for their uniqueness of size, transportability, and difficulty in locating the mine of origin once the rough diamond enters the world diamond market.

The Importance/Attractiveness of Coltan

The Democratic Republic of Congo holds 80% of the world’s reserve of colombo-tantalite ore, or coltan, which is the key ingredient in pinhead capacitors. These capacitors “regulate voltage and store energy in mobile phones”²⁷ of which millions are sold every year. In 2001, it was believed that this ore was one of the strategic minerals that were fueling the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo.²⁸ That suspicion was proved accurate several years later.

One of the potentially long-term unintended effects from mining this ore is the fact that the mining labor force migrated from farming to mining. Farming is a perishable skill as well as the tools needed to farm. The longer these former farmers remain as miners, the more difficult it will become for them to return to farming.²⁹ The artisan mining techniques currently being used can not remain in affect forever. These miners will have to either return back to farming or transition to some other occupation. They may not be able to return to farming if their skills have completely atrophied.

There is a large economic incentive for a worker to shift from farming to mining. A coltan miner can earn as much as \$200 U.S. dollars per month compared to the average \$10 monthly salary for workers in other sectors of the economy.³⁰

Coltan is mined from the same region in the Democratic Republic of Congo that is shared with 86% of the world's eastern lowland gorillas. In 2001, the Born Free Foundation reported that:

The forests are being destroyed and gorillas are being killed and snared for 'bushmeat' to feed the hundreds of miners and to sell at markets. Recent reports indicate that up to 90% of eastern lowland gorillas may have been killed in the last 3 years. Fears are that without immediate political action, they may be headed towards an inescapable extinction.³¹

In 2001, no government or non-government agency with enough strength was able to protect 90% of the world's eastern lowland gorilla population.

A reporter from the Born Free Foundation explained that miners would provide one spoon full of coltan to the Rwanda military each week for the right to mine coltan. An additional spoon full of coltan would be giving each week to the "chief of hill". At some coltan mining locations there were between 10,000 and 15,000 miners.³² When the market price of coltan was high, this quantity of coltan provided almost \$1 million per month to the Rwanda military.³³

Companies that use coltan are aware of the impact coltan mining process has on the environment and on the gorilla population. They are also aware there are some coltan suppliers that were selling coltan that was mined from conflict regions. As a result, "American-based Kemet, the world's largest maker of tantalum capacitors, has asked its suppliers to certify that their coltan ore does not come from Dem. Rep. of Congo or from neighboring countries."³⁴ Kemet's actions are similar in nature to what is being prescribed by the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Organization. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Organization will be described later in this paper.

With enough government, NGO, and company involvement, a "Gorilla Safe" cell phone marketing campaign could be launched.³⁵ This could improve the gorilla situation in the same manner that the "Dolphin Safe" tuna meat campaign reduced the unnecessary slaughter of dolphins in the 1990's. It was estimated that the tuna industry had killed 7 million dolphins over the previous 30 years through their fishing techniques.³⁶ It was only through this campaign that the tuna industry switched to alternate fishing techniques that reduced the risk of killing dolphins.³⁷ A similar campaign could help the gorilla population.

The Importance/Attractiveness of Diamonds

Diamonds are a unique mineral. They are easy to extract from the soil, easy to transport, hard to trace back to their mine of origin, and are very valuable. Diamonds are used primarily in one of two markets. One is the jewelry market and the other market is the industrial market.

African diamonds heading to the jewelry market were a central theme in two recent movies: *The Lord of War* and *Blood Diamonds*. In both movies, diamonds were viewed as being a fundamental part of the violence by providing warlords with the financial backing to continue the conflicts. For the diamond's contribution to the conflict, they are frequently called "conflict diamonds" or "blood diamonds". It is widely believed that the "blood diamonds" of Sierra Leone funded rebel leader Foday Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front enabling his men to wage a guerilla war against the elected government and also against civilians in the north-east of Sierra Leone."³⁸

The United States purchases about nine billion dollars' worth of diamonds every year which represents more than two-thirds of the world's sales.³⁹ At the height of the diamond fuelled wars in Angola and Sierra Leone, it was estimated that blood "diamonds represented as much as 15% of the diamonds entering the diamond market".⁴⁰ It is very likely that some diamonds sold in the United States provided the necessary funding that extended the duration of the wars resulting in many additional deaths in Angola and Sierra Leone. To a much greater extent, the same thing occurred years later in the Democratic Republic of Congo, between 1996 and 2003, when 3.8 million people died as the result of the war.⁴¹

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme was created in order to reduce the possibility of diamonds extending the duration of future wars.

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) is an international certification scheme aimed at preventing conflict diamonds from entering the legitimate trade and from funding conflicts. Its roots are found in the Kimberley Process negotiations between governments, civil society and the diamond industry, which began in 2000 in Kimberley, South Africa.⁴²

The Kimberley Process took its name from Kimberley, South Africa where the South African government hosted the first Kimberley Process meeting. "The Kimberley Process was endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)."⁴³ "The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) was officially launched in a Ministerial Meeting in Interlaken, Switzerland, in November 2002."⁴⁴ It was the result of three years of negotiations between governments and the diamond industry.

The participants agreed to implement the process in January 2003. It represents the efforts of 71 governments to prevent the distribution of diamonds that were mined in disputed regions where the proceeds from the sale of the diamonds could be used to fund wars of insurgency.⁴⁵ The goal was to stop the sale of all conflict diamonds.

The Kimberley Process is an international governmental process that was set up to prevent the sale of conflict diamonds.

The first implementation step was for the participating governments to legitimize their internal controls for the distribution and sale of diamonds. The intent was to certify the absence of conflict diamonds.⁴⁶ The diamonds were to be shipped in sealed containers with accompanying Kimberley Process Certificates verifying that the container was free of conflict diamonds. The receiving country then had the obligation to deny any unsealed containers or diamonds that were without proper certification.⁴⁷

The participating countries were both morally and financially motivated to reduce the negative publicity that conflict diamonds brought to the diamond industry. They believed that this negative publicity could reduce the overall demand for all diamonds and not just conflict diamonds. The NGO community used this negative publicity tool to galvanize the NGO community. The NGO community played a large role in increasing public awareness and maintaining media coverage on the plight of the African people and the impact that diamonds had on the conflict. More than 200 NGOs came together and formed a coalition on behalf of the plight of the African people.⁴⁸

Amnesty International recommends improving the Kimberley Process in three areas. Those three areas are to strengthen government controls, increase government oversight of the diamond industry, and publish statistics. To strengthen government controls there must be detailed, specific standards for each government to follow. The current standards are as varied as the countries themselves. Governments need to increase their oversight of the diamond industry. The governments must step in and do a better job at inspecting imports, exports, and sampling their businesses for compliance. The Kimberley Process needs to be enforced through the entire length of the diamond pipeline. Publishing statistics will make public record the amount of diamonds each country mined. "This information is not commercially sensitive. Statistical data is an important way to detect anomalies in the diamond trade that could indicate blood diamond trading."⁴⁹

The Kimberley Process is not funded. The operating costs are shared between the nations by volunteering their time and resources.⁵⁰ However, there are NGOs who could

provide the independent monitoring that would improve the overall effectiveness of the Kimberley Process if funding was available.

The Global Witness, just like Amnesty International, believes conflict diamonds are still entering the legitimate diamond trade.⁵¹ While this may be true, the volume of conflict diamonds entering the diamond market has been significantly reduced. The Kimberley Process completed their three year review in October 2006. The next section will highlight the results from the three year review.

“Since its conception the Kimberley Process has heralded a new approach to regulating the natural resource trade, setting an important precedent for subsequent global initiatives, such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.”⁵² The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative will be discussed in the section following the results of the Kimberley Process’s formal three year review.

Results of the Kimberley Process’s Formal Three Year Review

In October 2006, the Kimberley Process’s participating members took part in a formal three year review of the Kimberley Process. The lead paragraph of the Executive Summary of this document reads:

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) is an example of international cooperation at its best. In the first three years of its operation it has proved remarkably successful, to the point that now the vast majority of production and international trade of rough diamonds are moved through official Kimberley channels. The successful implementation of the KPCS is based on a flexible and pragmatic approach, where ad hoc solutions are adopted because they worked, and Participants and Observers have volunteered the resources necessary.⁵³

The Kimberley Process’s three year review took place at the same time the security situation in the conflict diamond region improved. The governments from Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Sierra Leone have been able to increase their control over their diamond industries. As a result, conflict diamonds no longer have the same impact that they once had.⁵⁴

Controlling the distribution of conflict diamonds is difficult. Many African countries control enormous land masses with very porous borders and lack supporting infrastructure in conflict diamond regions. However, the “Government, the diamond industry, and civil society have worked remarkably well together within the Kimberley Process.”⁵⁵ There has been a marked decrease in the number of conflict diamonds reaching the diamond market.⁵⁶ This holds true for

most countries with the exception of Liberia. According to the U.S. Department of State, Liberia has only recently engaged in the Kimberley Process.

As a counter argument, Amnesty International stated that “the United Nations has recently reported that a significant volume of blood diamonds from Cote d’Ivoire is entering the legitimate trade.”⁵⁷ As a whole, Governments are not doing enough to completely stop the sale of blood diamonds and the diamond industry is not doing enough to discourage the sale of blood diamonds.⁵⁸

A decrease in the market price for conflict diamonds is a direct reflection as to how the Kimberley Process is maturing. As the market price for the conflict diamonds decreases, the supply of the conflict diamonds will decrease as well.⁵⁹

The U.S. Department of State (DOS) reviewed the KPSC. The DOS was impressed with the results and then published 46 recommendations that they thought would improve the process.

U.S. Department of State’s Kimberley Process Recommendations

The U.S. Department of State’s 46 recommendations can be summarized into six broad categories: (1) impact of the KPCS, (2) clarifying technical provisions of the scheme, (3) operational problems, (4) peer review monitoring mechanism, (5) statistical underpinning of the KPSC, (6) internal control, and (7) a global inclusive membership.⁶⁰ A number of these recommendations match the recommendations from Amnesty International.

It is generally accepted that the Kimberley Process made a positive impact on the illicit diamond trade. Can the success of the Kimberley Process be expanded beyond diamonds to include other strategic minerals? The answer is yes and that process is called the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

Countries with good governance that are also rich in natural resources can create strong economic growth and prosperity through the use of their natural resources. The opposite effect can take place with countries rich in natural resources but with poor or weak governance. In these countries, the resources fuel poverty, corruption, and conflict. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Organization calls this situation a “resource curse.”⁶¹ “The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Organization (EITI) aims to defeat this “curse” by improving transparency and accountability.”⁶²

British Prime Minister Tony Blair launched the voluntary initiative, the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, in 2002.⁶³ “The EITI is a coalition of governments, companies, civil

society groups, investors and international organizations. The EITI supports improved governance in resource-rich countries through the full publication, verification, and comparison of company payments with government revenues from oil, gas, and mining”⁶⁴ This transparency and accountability of payments and receipts will close many of the loopholes that are typically present in countries with weak governance.

“Knowing what governments receive, and what companies pay, is critical first step to holding decision-makers accountable for the use of those revenues.”⁶⁵ An environment where decision-makers are not held accountable or where their actions are obscured to the population could create an environment where corruption could thrive. Corruption directly leads to political instability. Political instability increases the investment risk for investors as well as for the international financial institutions. This in turn discourages the long-term capital investments that promote prosperity. What is created is a situation where the economy appears to be in a continual state of disrepair.⁶⁶ The goal of the EITI is to reverse this process by making transparent the quantity of natural resources transferred and the revenues generated from oil, gas, and mining revenues.

There were twenty-two countries supporting the EITI at the time this paper was written. The countries are dispersed around the world with fourteen from Africa, three from Europe, two from East Asia, and three from Latin America. A current list of supporting members can be obtained from the EITI website at www.eitransparency.org.⁶⁷

There is a broad six step process each country must proceed through to be a supporting member of the EITI. The basic steps are to sign up, set up, process development, disclosure and publication, public dissemination and discussion, and review.⁶⁸

There are twelve EITI principles that are the building blocks for the initiative. The first building block captures the essence of what EITI is trying to achieve. It reads:

We share a belief that the prudent use of natural resource wealth should be an important engine for sustainable economic growth that contributes to sustainable development and poverty reduction, but if not managed properly, can create negative economic and social impacts.⁶⁹

The potential financial benefit to the countries taking part in EITI is huge. Nigeria had tremendous results during their first two years of implementation.

Nigeria called their EITI initiative the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI). In a two year period from 2004 to 2005, the Nigerian government reported that it gained about \$1 billion in the oil and gas industry through the improved transparency that the NEITI provided. The NEITI Executive Secretary, Dr. Bright Okogwu, is quoted saying, “We have been able to do this to the extent that Nigeria has now become the country that everybody

sees as a flag bearer with regards to the EITI. For instance, the EITI requires companies to publish what they pay; and on the side of government, they should also reveal how much they are receiving so that there is that flow and everybody will be satisfied that there is nobody cheating anybody.”⁷⁰ Had Nigeria not instituted the NEITI, they would have potentially lost \$1 billion worth of revenue.

Options for Nations to Consider

There are three basic options available for any government to consider when the early stages of a conflict are recognized. The first option is to maintain an isolationist position and allow unimpeded freedom to combatants and non-combatants to create their own future. A second option is to support non-governmental organizations attempt to ease the burden borne by non-combatants. The final option is when a government could act independently, form a coalition, or encourage the United Nations to act on the potential conflict.

President Bush mentioned Africa in his State of the Union address on 23 January 2007. In the section of the speech where he mentions Africa, he stated “American foreign policy is more than a matter of war and diplomacy. Our work in the world is also based on a timeless truth: To whom much is given, much is required.” America is one of many nations that are blessed with resources, peace, and prosperity. Many would agree with President Bush in that much is required of us. President Bush’s statement makes it politically difficult to support an isolationist point of view.

We must act to help limit the suffering of non-combatants during conflicts. As a minimum, we must analyze the components of the conflict and determine if it is one of our policies or our demand for natural resources that could be fueling the conflict. This was the case with the Democratic Republic of Congo where our demand for exploitable minerals fueled the conflict and contributed to the death of millions of people. As a caveat, even with prompt and accurate analysis we would not have been able to prevent the conflict but we could have reduced its intensity had we recognized that exploitable minerals were extending the conflict.

The war in the Democratic Republic of Congo lasted over seven years. The international community knew that there was unrest in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Non-governmental organizations responded to this war within the limits of their abilities and resources. There was only a limited response by the governments during the seven year war. We must do better as an international community.

Non-governmental organizations such as Doctors without Borders, Amenity International, Red Cross, or Global Witness are universally recognized as organizations that focus on the

welling being of non-combatants. These organizations should not be state sponsored or they risk losing their impartiality but they could be better financially supported. The United Nations is one such organization that could provide funding to these non-governmental organizations to focus relief efforts on the non-combatants.

The world's problems do not rest on the shoulders of a single nation but a single nation can make a difference. In the genocide section of The National Security Strategy it states, "History teaches that sometimes other states will not act unless America does its part." Doing our part does not imply that the U.S. must lead every relief effort. As a minimum, we must be an active enabler. We can be an active enabler by adding resources and capabilities to a relief effort that other nations may be unable to provide.

Other nations have already taken actions to potentially eliminate some of the enablers that contributed to the intensity of the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Kimberley Process and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative are two examples of the international community working together to reduce the potential for exploitable minerals to extend future conflicts. This is also an example where a relief effort does not always require a military solution. In many cases the other elements of national power - economic, diplomatic, and law-enforcement - could be more effective if they are executed in a timely manner.

Conclusion

The availability or presence of exploitable minerals is not the "stand alone" reason why African governments or warlords begin conflicts. The conflicts are the "result of the combined geographic, political, economic, and military factors"⁷¹ which first establishes the necessary framework to initiate a conflict. However, the exploitation of minerals as a funding source can extend the duration of conflicts and increase the loss of life. The war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which resulted in the estimated 4.0 million deaths,⁷² is an excellent example where the availability of exploitable minerals did not cause the conflict but it did extend the duration and intensity of the conflict. Exploitable minerals do not cause conflicts, people cause conflicts.

The world has a great responsibility to the people of Africa to do everything it can to reduce the already inherent instability that exists within Africa. Countries that have received their independence from their colonial masters deserve our continued assistance until they have strengthened their respective forms of governance.

A program such as the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme is an excellent example of how the international community has taken action to reduce the impact that diamonds have

on extending conflicts.⁷³ However, the rest of the international community can do more to strengthen the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. The next logical step would be to follow the recommendations from Amnesty International: 1) strengthen government controls, 2) increase government oversight, and 3) publish statistics.⁷⁴ The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme is currently financed through voluntary contributions from participating members and deserves funding that is more independent and predictable.

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme was the precursor to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative does for oil, gas, and mining that the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme did for diamonds. Improving the transparency in the natural resource sector can help eliminate one of the areas that could fuel future conflict.

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